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AUTHOR Dunker, Robert E.; Belcastro, Frank P.
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ABSTRACT

To gather data on the satisfaction of community college students with their faculty academic advising, a survey was conducted in winter 1989-90 of a random sample of 750 full- and part-time students at an urban multi-campus community college in Iowa. Specifically, the survey sought information on student characteristics and levels of satisfaction on a 5-point scale with overall advising, the frequency and length of advising meetings, and the ease of making appointments. Study findings, based on 398 returned surveys that had all the questions related to advising answered, included the following: (1) regarding overall satisfaction with advising, no significant differences were found between full- and part-time students; (2) for both groups, the more frequently students and advisors met, the higher the students' satisfaction with the advising process; (3) full-time students were significantly more satisfied if their advising sessions were between 15 and 30 minutes, while part-time students were significantly more satisfied if their advising sessions were more than 30 minutes; and (4) full-time students were significantly more satisfied with their advising than part-time students if it was easy to make appointments and significantly less satisfied if it was somewhat difficult to make appointments. Includes recommendations for improving advisement, data tables, and the survey instrument. Contains 12 references. (KP)

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A Survey of Full-time and Part-time Students' Satisfaction with Faculty Academic Advising

Robert E. Dunker
Western Iowa Technical College
Frank P. Belcastro
University of Dubuque

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Abstract

A survey was made of full-time and part-time students at an urban multi-campus community college. The population consisted of 398 students who were administered a questionnaire devised to measure student satisfaction with their academic advising. Results indicated that there was no significant difference between full-time students and part-time students in their advising satisfaction based on frequency of advising meetings and based on their preference for greater ease in making advising appointments. Full-time students were more satisfied with their academic advising if the length of advising sessions were between 15 and 30 minutes. Part-time students were more satisfied with their academic advising if the length of advising sessions were more than 30 minutes.

A Survey of Full-time and Part-time Students' Satisfaction with Faculty Academic Advising

As is well-known, one must be aware of the effectiveness of the advising system in order to serve students efficiently. Students' satisfaction with faculty academic advising systems range from low to high (Feldman, 1993; Hall, Pollard, & Mickelson, 1986; Mutter, 1992; Okun, Ruehlman, & Karoly, 1990).

While full-time and part-time students have been studied as separate entities, there have been few studies comparing the two groups (Dillon, 1990; Isonio, 1993; Kangas, 1991; Okun, Ruehlman, & Karoly, 1990). Significant differences existed between full-time and part-time students in their satisfaction with academic advising (Nespoli & Radcliffe, 1982) but only global satisfaction was measured. The purpose of the present study was to make that comparison in specific areas.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the satisfaction of full-time and part-time students with their faculty academic advising in order to determine whether faculty academic advising could be improved.

Research Questions

We tested four research questions that asked: did

significant differences exist between full-time and part-time students in their satisfaction with:

1. their overall academic advising?
2. the frequency of advising meetings (never met advisor, met once a year, met once every other quarter, met once a quarter, met more than once a quarter) in their academic advising?
3. the length of advising meetings (never met, less than five minutes, about 15 minutes, about 30 minutes, more than 30 minutes) in their academic advising?
4. the ease of making advising appointments (very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, never attempted, advisor did contacting) in their academic advising?

Method

Subjects. The research population was a random sample of full-time and part-time students enrolled at the several campuses of an urban community college; the students among the several campuses were homogeneous. Five hundred thirteen (68.4%) of a total of 750 students completed our questionnaire. Only those subjects were considered who responded to all 16 questions on the questionnaire regarding their perception of satisfaction with an academic advising

system. This restriction reduced the total sample to 398 (53.1%), a response rate which limited the generalizability of the study.

The average age of the subjects was 29.6 years, 60% were females, 81% had parenting responsibilities, 93.3% worked either part-time or full-time; 52% were day students. Full-time students were those enrolled for 12 or more quarter-hours of classes. Figure 1 contains a comparison of full-time and part-time students by the above variables.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Instrument. The Academic Advising Questionnaire (see Appendix) was devised to measure students' satisfaction with their advising services. The questionnaire is composed of two parts and consists of a total of 25 questions. The first part contains nine questions which refer to several demographic and enrollment data items. The second part of the instrument contains 16 questions which require students to evaluate their satisfaction with their advising services on a five-point Likert-type scale: SA, Strongly Agree(5); A, Agree(4); U, Undecided(3); D, Disagree(2); and SD, Strongly Disagree(1).

Content validity. In order to gain greater validity, we set out to create an instrument that reflected not only the advising situation at the community college but also the present state of advising. We developed the questionnaire on the basis of (a) a review of the literature related to academic advising, (b) interviewing students about their expectations and needs regarding academic advising and (c) interviewing counselors and advisors about their perception of academic advising.

We conducted a content validity study at the research site by surveying a sample population of students. A panel of three department chairpersons and a counseling professional examined the results of the study for content validity. As a result of their evaluation the instrument was refined and they then were asked to rate each of the final items on its relevance to advising satisfaction. Each item was rated independently using a four-point rating scale (1 = not relevant to 4 = very relevant) which yielded the Content Validity Index. The Index reflected the percent of agreement among the panel members and equalled 1.00 (Waltz, Strickland, & Lenz, 1991).

Reliability. An item-by-item analysis through the use of the Pearson Split Half Correlation Coefficient

secured the reliability of the questionnaire. The Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient is .942, significant at the .001 level. This is an estimate of the reliability of the "perception of satisfaction" index only half as long as the original. To estimate what the reliability of the whole instrument would be, we applied the Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula. It resulted in a reliability of .97.

Procedure. The administration of the questionnaire took place during the winter quarter of 1989/1990. It was carried out under the supervision of the college counseling centers' staffs. Students were notified of their selection and requested to report to their respective counseling centers. At the centers, the students were made aware both of the purposes of the study and of the questionnaire and given the choice of completing or not completing the questionnaire. Further, the students were instructed to complete the questionnaire anonymously. A specific two-week time period was set aside in which students were to report to their respective centers. At the end of that time, the centers returned the completed questionnaires to the experimenters.

Results

For the purposes of this study, we used the one-

way and two-way analyses of variance. F-ratios were computed using a .05 significance level as criterion. For significant main effects, the Sheffe' method was employed to determine which differences were significant.

Question 1. Is there a significant difference between full-time and part-time students in their satisfaction with their academic advising? Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations for both groups while Table 2 shows the results of a one-way analysis of variance with a non-significant F-ratio. Thus, no significant difference existed between full-time and part-time students in their overall satisfaction with their academic advising.

Insert Tables 1 & 2 about here

Question 2. Is there a significant difference between full-time and part-time students in their advising satisfaction based on the frequency of advising meetings? Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations for part-time and full-time students of their perception-of-satisfaction scores by frequency of meeting replies; Table 4 shows the results of a two-way analysis of variance with a significant F-ratio

for the frequency-of-meeting effect. Thus, significant differences existed in student advising satisfaction based on frequency of advising meetings for both full-time and part-time students. Further analysis showed that for both groups, significant differences existed in satisfaction between those students who met with their advisors once a year and those who met with them more than once a year; also, between those who met with their advisors only once a quarter and those who met more than once a quarter.

Insert Tables 3 & 4 about here

Question 3. Is there a significant difference between full-time and part-time students in their advising satisfaction based on the length of advising meetings? Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations for part-time and full-time students of their perception-of-satisfaction scores by length of meeting. Table 6 shows a significant F-ratio for the interaction effect. Thus, significant differences existed in student advising satisfaction based on length of advising meeting for both full-time and part-time students. Further analysis showed that full-time students were significantly more satisfied with their advising if the

lengths of the advising sessions were between 15 and 30 minutes; when the advising sessions were more than 30 minutes, the part-time students were more satisfied with their advising.

Insert Tables 5 & 6 here

Question 4. Is there a significant difference between part-time and full-time students in their advising satisfaction based on their ease in making advising appointments? Table 7 presents the means and standard deviations for part-time and full-time students of their perception-of-satisfaction scores by ease of meeting arrangement. Table 8 shows a significant F-ratio for the interaction effect. Thus, significant differences existed in student advising satisfaction based on ease of meeting arrangements. Further analysis showed that full-time students were significantly more satisfied with their advising if it was very easy or somewhat easy to make advising appointments; when it was somewhat difficult to make advising appointments, the full-time students were significantly less satisfied than the part-time students with their academic advising.

Insert Tables 7 & 8 about here

Conclusions and Discussion

In many community colleges, one finds that the majority of part-time students come to the campus in the evening after most full-time faculty have left. Since part-time students arrive in time for class and leave immediately afterwards, little time is left for academic advising (Dunker, 1990). Thus, satisfaction with academic advising may differ between part-time and full-time students. However, the results of this study showed that, overall, full-time and part-time students were equally satisfied with their academic advising as a whole. Furthermore, for both types of students, the more frequently the students and advisors met, the higher the students' satisfaction with the advising process; thus, more agreement between both types. Superficially, one might conclude that few if any changes need to be made in the academic advising programs for students of either status. However, because further analyses showed significant differences, this conclusion would not be justified.

Although full-time students were significantly more satisfied with their advising if the lengths of

the advising sessions were between 15 and 30 minutes, the part-time students were significantly more satisfied with their advising if the length of the advising sessions was more than 30 minutes. Full-time students have a full load of classes, meetings, and other activities to occupy their day and, thus, have less time for long advising sessions; it follows that they should prefer shorter advising sessions. This may also explain why full-time students were significantly more satisfied with their advising if it was very easy or somewhat easy to make advising appointments; the ease of making appointments along with the shorter sessions meant that they could squeeze them between classes or activities.

Most students perceive advising not only as an opportunity for acquiring relevant and accurate information but also as a resource for receiving help with problems affecting their academic performance (Gordon & Carberry, 1984). This is especially true for part-time students who have the distraction of jobs (Russell & Schmid, 1980) and are not on campus long enough to be aware of deadlines and of changes on campus (Dunker, 1990). This may explain the need for longer advising sessions (more than 30 minutes); students may want to receive pertinent information and

discuss academic problems.

In addition, full-time students interact more with their peers and thus probably receive more information and advice from them, leading to a need for shorter advising sessions than do part-time students. Also, part-time students are older, have greater parenting responsibilities, and probably lead more complicated lives on the whole than full-time students which leads to the need for longer sessions and to making better use of advisors.

Moreover, full-time students were significantly more satisfied with their advising if it was very easy or somewhat easy to make advising appointments. On the other hand, full-time students were significantly less satisfied than part-time students with their academic advising when it was somewhat difficult to make advising appointments. These differences in tolerance may be due to the younger average age of the full-time students and lower parental responsibilities compared to part-time students. Having lived longer and taken on more responsibilities during that time, part-time students have matured to the point where ease or difficulty in making advising appointments do not hold a high priority for them compared to their other problems in life. Thus, a tolerance for low priority

problems exists for them as well as lower expectations overall compared to the younger, less experienced full-time students.

Recommendations

It is recommended that no differential advising strategies be used with full-time and part-time students based on their overall satisfaction with their academic advising, based on their preference for frequent advising meetings, and based on their preference for greater ease in making advising appointments. However, based on the specific conclusions of this study, the following differential strategy is recommended. The length of advising sessions for full-time students should be between 15 and 30 minutes; the length of advising sessions for part-time students should be more than 30 minutes.

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Figure 1. Comparison of Full-time and Part-time Students by Various Variables.

Description	Full-time	Part-time
Status	43%	57%
Average Age	25.1	32.3
Gender: Male	39.8%	32%
Female	60.2%	68%
Parenting Responsibilities	70.7%	91.3%
Work (part-time or full-time)	91.6%	95%
Attendance: Day	70%	30%
Evening	30%	70%

Table 1

Mean Satisfaction Index and Standard Deviation for Full-time and Part-time Students

Type	N	Mean	SD
Full-time Students	170	3.344	.755
Part-time Students	223	3.102	.701
Total	393		

Table 2

Analysis of Variance for Full-time and Part-time Students--Satisfaction Scores

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Variance Estimate	F-ratio
Between-groups	134.93	1	134.93	3.77[a]
Within-groups	14172.84	396	35.79	
Total	14307.77	397		

[a]not significant

Table 3

Perception-of-satisfaction Scores by Full-time/Part-time Status and Frequency of Meeting

	Frequency of Meeting				
	More than Once a Quarter	Once a Quarter	Once Every Other Quarter	Once a Year	Never Met
Full-time Students					
Mean	4.10	3.50	3.40	2.85	2.71
SD	.70	.79	.85	.79	.88
N	39	79	9	18	25
Part-time Students					
Mean	4.17	3.49	3.40	3.06	3.00
SD	.54	.65	.41	.61	.17
N	18	53	19	55	76

Table 4

Analysis of Variance of

Satisfaction Scores for Full-time and Part-time Students by

Frequency of Meeting

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Variance Estimate	F-ratio
Main Effects	64.019	5	12.804	31.769
Fulltime vs. Part-time	.978	1	.978	2.426
Meeting Frequency	60.804	4	15.201	37.717***
Interactions				
Fulltime-Parttime vs. Meeting Frequency	1.334	4	.334	.828
Explained	65.353	9	7.261	18.017
Residual	153.553	381	.403	
Total	218.905	390	.561	

***p<.001

Table 5

Perception-of-satisfaction Scores by Full-time/Part-time Status and Length of Meeting

	Length of Meeting				
	More than 30 Minutes	Approx. 30 Minutes	Approx. 15 Minutes	Less than 5 Minutes	Never Talked
Full-time Students					
Mean	4.22	3.99	3.64	2.85	2.68
SD	.48	.75	.79	.69	.87
N	10	24	82	28	26
Part-time Students					
Mean	4.41	3.77	3.38	3.04	2.99
SD	.61	.38	.61	.64	.69
N	4	27	83	35	74

Table 6

Analysis of Variance of Satisfaction Scores for Full-time and Part-time Students by Length of Meeting

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Variance Estimate	F-ratio
Main Effects	58.783	5	11.757	28.298
Full-time vs. Part-time	.193	1	.193	.464
Meeting Length	55.501	4	13.875	33.397***
Interactions				
Fulltime-Parttime vs. Meeting Length	5.815	4	1.454	3.499**
Explained	64.598	9	7.178	17.278
Residual	159.121	383	.415	
Total	223.719	392	.571	

**p < .01

***p < .001

Table 7

Perception-of-satisfaction Scores by Full-time/Part-time Status and Ease of Meeting Arrangement

	Ease of Meeting Arrangement				
	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Never Attempted	Advisor Contacted Me
Full-time Students					
Mean	4.12	3.60	2.33	3.05	3.25
SD	.60	.61	.74	.70	.46
N	56	54	32	23	5
Part-time Students					
Mean	3.84	3.38	2.89	3.00	3.36
SD	.61	.62	.59	.78	.26
N	44	61	21	89	4

Table 8

Analysis of Variance of Satisfaction Scores for Full-time and Part-time Students by Ease of Meeting Arrangements

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Variance Estimate	F-ratio
Main Effects	91.527	5	18.305	56.055
Full-time vs. Part-time	.509	1	.509	1.560
Ease of Meeting	88.545	4	22.136	67.786***
Interactions				
Fulltime-Parttime vs. Ease of Meeting	6.774	4	1.694	5.186***
Explained	98.302	9	10.922	33.446
Residual	123.768	379	.327	
Total	222.069	388	.572	

***p $<$ .001

Appendix

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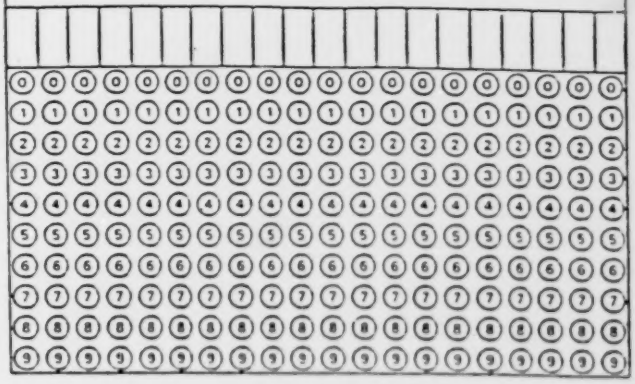
ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE



MARKING DIRECTIONS

- Use black lead pencil only (No. 2 or softer)
- Do not use ink or ballpoint pens.
- Make heavy black marks that fill the circle completely.
- Erase completely any answer you wish to change.

EXAMPLES

The purpose of this questionnaire is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Academic Advising Program at your Community College. Your answers will help us to improve our service to students. Please check your response to each question in the space provided.

1. Your age is:
   a. 17-21 years
   b. 22-15 years
   c. 26-30 years
   d. 31-35 years
   e. over 35 years

A B C D E

2. Your gender is: a. Male b. Female

A B

3. Do you have parental responsibilities?
   a. Yes b. No

A B

4. Do you work either part-time or full time?
   a. Yes b. No

A B

5. Are you enrolled in
   a. predominantly day classes
   b. predominantly evening classes

A B

6. Is your status: a. full time (12 hours or more) b. part-time (less than 12 hours)

A B

7. How many times do you usually meet with your advisor? (in person or by phone):
   a. more than once a quarter
   b. once a quarter
   c. once every other quarter
   d. once a year
   e. never met

A B C D E

8. What is the average amount of time you spend with your advisor when you talk to him/her?
   a. more than 30 minutes
   b. approx. 30 minutes
   c. approx. 15 minutes
   d. less than 5 minutes
   e. never talked

A B C D E

9. How easy is it for you to arrange an appointment with your advisor?
a. very easy, b. somewhat easy
c. somewhat difficult
d. I have not attempted an appt.
e. my advisor contacted me

A	B	C	D	E
○	○	○	○	○

INSTRUCTIONS: Please give your impressions of the advising you have received by responding to the statements below by filling in the appropriate circles at the right.
SA = strongly agree, A = agree, U = undecided, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree

	SA	A	U	D	SD
10. My advisor has been readily available for consultation.	○	○	○	○	○
11. My advisor listens to me.	○	○	○	○	○
12. My advisor has taken an interest in me that extends beyond our meeting.	○	○	○	○	○
13. My advisor has helped me with personal problems.	○	○	○	○	○
14. My advisor permits me to make my own decisions.	○	○	○	○	○
15. My advisor has time to help me when I need him/her.	○	○	○	○	○
16. My advisor was helpful with the selection of courses for future quarters.	○	○	○	○	○
17. I believe my advisor anticipates needs I have.	○	○	○	○	○
18. I would willingly share problems that I encounter with my advisor.	○	○	○	○	○
19. I would recommend my advisor to other students.	○	○	○	○	○
20. My advisor has introduced me to the various campus services available to me.	○	○	○	○	○
21. My advisor cares about my future career success.	○	○	○	○	○
22. My advisor helps me achieve my educational goals.	○	○	○	○	○
23. My advisor has been well-prepared for each meeting.	○	○	○	○	○
24. The amount of time I spent with my advisor was adequate to meet my advising needs.	○	○	○	○	○